

Deaths Knell,
Or, *The sicke Mans Passing-Bell* :
Summoning all sick Consciencs to p
pare themselves for the comming of the gre
Day of Doome, lest mercies gate be shut
against them.

Fit for all those that desire to arrive at the
Heavenly Ierusalem.

Whereunto are added Prayers fit for Housholders.

The sixteenth Edition.

Written by *W. Perkins.*



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Et the memory of Death (good Christian) be ever the Looking-glasse of thy life, thy constant Companion, and inseparable Spouse, let thy solace be the sighes of a sorrowfull soule, and those the more bitter the better: whilst thou cravest here below, fasten all thy labours upon the Commandements of thy Creator, for those in thy small passage, must be the Pilot to steere thee into the Haven of Heaven: thinke every moment thou art in the Looking-glasse, that the date of thy pilgrimage is well nigh expired, and that the lampe of thy life lyeth tynckling upon the snaffe, and that now it stands free upon to look toward thy celestiall home: thy senses are enfebled, thy senses impaired, and on every side the tottering and ruinous cottage of thy faine flesh threatneth a fall.

And meeting so many Harbingers of death, how can you but prepare for so suddenly a guest: the young man may dye quickly, but the old cannot live long: the young mans life be ca-

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uality may be cut off, but the aged by Physicke cannot be preserved: Greene yeeres must resolve to goe to the Grave, and the Meditations of old age must dwell in the same: be mindfull of things past, carefull of things present, and provident for things to come. Use the blessings of Nature to the benefit of thy Soule: be wise in well-doing, and watchfull for thy end: Derve not the World, for that can possesse thee of nothing, but pride, envie, lust, anger, malice, and infinite follies: for it defileth a man with sinne, disquieteth with troubles, expelleth with labours, bereth with temptations, vanquisheth with paine delights, and miserably wrappeth him up in woefull calamities. The World it is an Ambassadour of the evill, a scourge of the good, a tyrant of the truth, a breaker of peace, a worker of Warre, a sweet of vices, a gall of vertues, a friend of lyes, an inventer of nobelities, a frabell to the ignozant, a table of Gluttons, a furnace of concupiscence, a sepulchre of the dead, a Prison of the living, a pitfall to the rich, a burthen to the poore, a Palace of Pilgrims, a Den of Deceivers, a slanderer of the good, a commender of the wicked, and a deluder of all. Thou hast no reason to dote upon the World, for at first it affords thee but a wrangling welcome, and at last turnes thee off with

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a fearefull farewell: mozeouer, it doth torment
thee; abuse thee, consume thee, and at length ex-
pell thee: Whereas on the contrary, Heauen
doth comfort thee, conserue thee and exalt thee.
On Earth thou sowest but in a field of Flint,
which bringeth forth nothing but a Crop of
care, and languishing for thy labour: it is time
therefore to leaue so unthriuing a Husbandry,
and to sowe in Gods ground the Seede of repen-
tant Sorrow, and water it with the teares of
humble Contrition: so shalt thou reape a plen-
tifull Haruest, and gather the Fruits of euerla-
sting consolation. Imagine thou the Spring to
bee spent, thy Summer ouer-past, and that thou
art arrived at the fall of the Lease, and though
thy loving Lord bee long forbear offenders,
yet at last hee will scourge them: and that his
patience lends us but respite to repent, not lea-
sure to sinne. Hee that is tossed with stormy
stormes, and cannot come to his desired Port,
rides little way, but is much turmoyled: so hee
that passeth many yeeres, and purchaseth but
small profit to his Soule, hath had a long being,
but a short life, for life is to bee measured by
vertuous Actions, not by number of dayes.
Some men by many dayes purchase many
deaths, and others in short space attaine to
life euerlasting. What is the Body without

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the soule, but a corrupted Carkesse: and what is the Soule without God, but a Sepulchre of sinne? Man was made, and sent hither to no other purpose, but onely to serue **G O D** in this life, and to enjoy Heauen in that life hereafter. If our end bee the Kingdome of Heauen, why are wee so much enamoured on the Earth? If the end of our Creation bee eternall Salvation, why hunt wee after the vanities of this vaine life? If our inheritance bee to raigne as Kings, why liue we like serbile slaves, in danger to be diuided from God, from Christ our Saviour, from the Angels, from the Communion of Saints, and from the hope of our celestiaall portion? If God be the way, the truth, and the life, then he that walketh without him, wandreth: that is not instructed by him, erreth: and that liueth without him, dyeth: to revolt from him, is falling: to retorne to him, is rising: to stay upon him, is sure standing: He it is from whom to depart, is to dye: to whom to repaire is to reuiue: in whom to trust, is truely to liue. **D**e not thou like those that begin not to liue, untill they be ready to dye, and then (when they deserue an enemies reward) come to craue of God a friends entertainment. Some thinke to snatch Heauen in a moment, which the best can scarce attaine in
many

many yeres: and when they have glutted them-
 selves with worldly delights, would sumpe
 from the Dyet of Dives, to the toyes of Lazarus:
 from the service of Satan, to the solace of a
 Saint. But be sure, that God is not so penuri-
 ous, to make his Kingdome saleable for the re-
 fuse and the reversion of their liues, who have
 sacrificed the principall and prime thereof to his
 enemies and their owne brutish appetites: then
 onely ceasing to sinne, when the ability of offen-
 ding is taken from them. What thanks is it to
 pardon our enemies, when we cannot hurt
 them: To giue away our goods, when we can
 keepe them no longer: To shake hands with
 our pleasures, when we can use them no more:
 To forsake sinne, when sinne leaueeth us: God
 may be mercifull at the last gaspe: but most mi-
 serable is that man, who casteth the Anchor of
 his eternall weale, on so uncertaine and
 sandy a point. The the so may he saued on the
 Crosse, and more sound at the last: yet it is not
 likely, that he should finde fauour at his death,
 whose life earned the wages of wrath, so that
 his petition should be assented, who more for
 feare of hell, and his owne selues sake, than for
 the love of God, or loathsomenesse of sin, cryeth
 for mercy.

But not off repentance therefore to the last

point : take Davids care in the morning : stay not till to morrow, though thou sufferest the Bud to bee blasted, the Flowers to fade, the Fruits to perish, the Leaves to wither, the Boughes to dry up, and the Body of the Tree to decay, yet still keepe life in the Root, for feare lest the whole become so well to Hell fire : for Where the Tree falleth there it lyeth. Imagine that time hath filed off the better part of thy naturall forces, and lest thou in the Lees of thy dying dayes : and that thou art onward in the voyage, and not farre from the Period of thy lost labour : bee not therefore dis-furnished of necessaries required in so perillous a journey. How many doe carefully beguine, industriously prosecute, and effectually end their labours in attaining to this transitory trash up on Earth : but of that great affaire of winning Heaven, or falling into Hell, there is had no respect. Nay, they doe not so much as remember, that there is a Hell for sinners, a Heaven for good liuers, a dreadfull day of Iudgement, or a strict reckoning to bee made. Death in its owne property is sufficiently fearefull, but farre more terrible, in respect of the iudgement where-to it summoneth.

If thou wert now laid on thy departing pillow : wearied with waiting, pinched with paine,

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paine, drowned in dolour, oppressed with the
heavie load of thy soze-past committed sinnes,
wounded with the sting of a guilty crying con-
science: if thou feltest the soze of death cracking
thy heart-strings asunder, ready to make the
sad divorce of thy Soule and Body, if thou lay-
est panting for shortnesse of breath, sweating a
fatall sweat, and tired with struggling against
deadly pangs; O, how much then wouldst thou
give for a dayes contrition, an houres repen-
tance, for a minutes amendment of life! Then
worlds would bee wortlesse in comparison of
a little time, which now by whole moneths and
yeres thou labithly mispendest. How deeply
would it wound thy Soule, when looking backe
into thy selfe thou shouldest espy many faults
committed, but none amended: many good
wozkes omitted, but none recovered, thy duty to
God promised, but not performed: How discon-
solable would thy case be, thy Friends being fled,
thy Senses affrighted, thy Minde amazed, thy
Memory decayed, thy Thoughts agast, and eve-
ry part disabled in its proper faculty, saving
onely the guilty Conscience crying out against
thee: What wouldst thou doe, when stripped
and turned out of thy house of Clay, into the
World of Wormes, the Den of Dust, and Ca-
bine of Corruption, from thence to be conven-
ted

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ted before a most severe Judge, carrying in thy owne bosome, thy Inditement ready written, and a perfect Register of all thy mis-deedes; when thou shouldest behold the glorious Majesty of Jesus Christ (clothed in white linen, through which, his body shining like precious stones, his eyes like burning lampes, his Face like lightning, his Armes and Legges like flaming Brasse, and his voyce as a shout of a multitude) prepared to passe the sentence upon thee: when thou shouldest see the great Judge offended above thee, hell open beneath thee: the Furnace flaming, the Devils waiting, the World burning, thy Conscience accusing, and thy selfe standing as a forlorne wretch, to receive thy fearefull and irrevocable sentence of condemnation.

Oh, bethinke thy selfe, how these visions would affright thee: to behold the gnashing of teeth, the horror of the place, the rigour of the paine, the ugliness of the company, and the eternity of these punishments: where the fire is unquenchable, the torment unsupportable, hopelesse, helpelesse, easelesse, and endlesse. For our fire may be endured, that intolerable; ours for comfort, that for torment; ours (if not fedde) extinguisheth, that (without feeding) never goeth out; ours giveth light,
that

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that, none : ours consumes the matter, and
ends the paine ; that torments, but neuer wa.
steth, to make the paine perpetuall. In Hell,
the lazie Flyterer must bee pricked with fla.
ming Forkes :- the Glutton fed with hunger
and thirst : the Drunkard quaffe Bowles of
burning Brimstone ; the Covetous pine in pe.
nury : the Lustfull embrace ugly Snakes : and
the Proud apparelled with shame and confusi.
on : and further to aggravate their grieve, and
heape up the measure of their unmeasurable
misery, they shall turne up their affrighted
eyes, and behold the make triumphing, the
godly reioycing : then shall they perceiue, base
apparell to bee glorious ; gawdy Attire infa.
mous ; the humble Cottage commended ; the
gilded Palace despised ; simple obedience
shew fairer than subtille policie : a cleare con.
science better accepted, then profound and ab.
struse Philosophy, zealous Prayers farre wor.
thier than fine Tales : good workes preferred
before sweet words. Is not he more than mad,
that will play away his time allotted to pre.
uent those intolerable calamities ? Is it not a
senselesse security, to hug in thy bosome so ma.
ny serpents as sinnes : or to foster in thy soule
so many malicious accusers, as mortall faults :
would it thou not then thinke one life too little

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to repent for so many iniquities, the least whereof is strong enough to hurle thee irrecoverable into these unspeakeable torments? Betimes then devote the residue of thy dayes; to make an attonement with Jehovah, the Generall Judge, and so endeavour to set free thy Soule from such confusion, as by sinne thou art sure to fall into. What canst thou purchase by being so long a customer to the World, but false Ware, suitable to such a Merchants shoppe, Where Trafficke is Tole; Wealth, Woe; Gain, Losse? What interest canst thou recover, that can equall thy Detriments in grace and goodnesse? Or what canst thou study in this vale of vanities, that is comparable to the favour of GOD? Let not thy youthfull affections oversway thee, for time will tell thee, they are but bubbling follies. Let not temporall feares mis-lead thee, for the force of reason will rather draw thee to feare God than men, and to stand more in awe of perpetuall then temporall punishments: Who would fasten his eternall affaires upon the slipperinesse of uncertaine life: or who (but one of distempered wits) would offer to put tricks upon him, who is the strict searcher out of the closest secrets: with whom he may dissemble to his cost, but to deceive him 'tis impossible? Wilt thou account
it

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it a craft to steale time from God, and to bestow
it on his enemies, who keepees tale to the least
minute of thy life, and at thy ending will call
thee to question, how thou hast imploied e-
very moment: Is it not preposterous policie
to fight against God, till our weapons bee blan-
ted, our forces enfebled, our strength made
impotent, our best spent, and at last when wee
are fallen into fainting, and sought our selves
well-nigh dead, then to presume of his mercy,
whom wee have so much offended, so long
opposed: Would it not bee held an erorbitant
course, that while the Ship is sound, the Pilot
well, the Saylors strong, the Gale favourable,
and the Seas calme, to lye carelesly idle at rove,
losing so seasonable weather, and then when
the Ship leaks, the Pilots sicke, the Partners
feeble, the winds aloft, the storme boysterous,
and the Waves outrageous, to launch forth,
boyll Sayle, and set out for a farre Journey:
Such are our evening-repenters, who in the
soudnesse of health, and perfect use of reason,
cannot abide to cut-Cables, and weigh those
Anchors that with-hold them from G O D:
but when their Senses are benumbed, their
Reason distracted, their Understanding dul-
led, and both Soule and Body tormented
with pangs of paines, and sorrowfull sicknesse,
then

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then will cast backe their memory on those weighty affaires: then will they needs become sudden Saints, that are scarce reasonable creatures.

How can a man disanimatèd with inward Garboyles of unsettled conscience, maimed in all his Faculties, and surrounded with such strange distempers, bee fit to dispose of his choicest Jewell, his soule, in so short a spurt: They that will loyter in Seed-time, and beginne to sowe when others reape: They that will have their Weapons to provide, when their Fellow-Souldiers goe forth to fight: They that will labish in health, and cast their accounts when they cannot speake: They that will sleepe out the day, and stumblingly travell in the Night; O let them thanke their owne folly if they dye in debt, and finally fall headlong into the pit of perdition. Let the griefe of thy Sore bee then the measure of thy sorrows, let a wilde Wound have a careful cure: let thy Contrition bee agreeable to thy Crime, and thy Repentance equall to thy transgressions. Thou must spend the Day in mourning, the Night in watching and weeping, And thy whole time in praying and practice of Repentance. Not every short fight will bee a sufficient satisfaction: nor every little knocke, a warrant to get in: for
many

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many cry. Lord, Lord, yet are not admitted. The foolish Virgins knocked, yet stood without: Judas conceived a sorrow for sinne, yet dyed desperately. Linger not thy conversion, nor put off thy repentance from day to day, lest the Almighty come unto thee in a minute, and in his wrath suddenly destroy thee: neither sojourne thou long in sinnefull security. nor thist off thy Repentance till feare inforce thee to it: for then it will be too late for thee to strive to stand when thou art already fallen. Frame out thy beginning as thou mearest to end, and endeavour to live as thou desirest to dye. Wilt thou sacrifice the Fatlings to the Fiend of darkenesse, & offer the carrion Carkeises to the Father of light: Wilt thou present the manne Crop to the Devill, and leave God the Gleanings: Wilt thou cramme the Devill with thy fairest fruits, and turne God to feede upon thy windfalls, and after gatherings: If Hell was prepared for the Devill, and Heaven purchased for man, why should not hee then provide for himselfe, but wilfully lose his inheritance by persisting in sinne: While wee draw healthfull breath, hope strongly perswades us that by teares overflowing from the Sea of a sorrowfull soule, wee may wash away our sinnes pollution, how soule soever: but being
once

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once at Deaths doze, notwithstanding our teeth
gnash, our tongues cry out, our throates be-
come hoarse with howling, our eyes gush Ri-
vers of teares; and our hearts send out sighes
as loud as Thunder yet will it not abate us,
for then none shall heare us, none assist us, no,
nor so much as comfort us: Then, O then,
shalt thou finde, though (alas) too late, that
thou hast lost thy labour, hast trifled away thy
time, and let slip the opportunity of thine owne
gaine. Thou shalt then perceiue thine errour
irreborable, thy punishment insupportable,
thy penitence unprofitable, thy grieffe, sorrow
and calamity irreborable: Let thy Soule
then enjoy her lawfull Soberaignty, and thy
body follow the footing of her directions: let
not thy servile senses, and lawlesse appetites
overcome her, and make her a Vassall in her
owne Dominions. Doeest thou desire to have
all good necessities, as good house, good furni-
ture, good fare, good apparell: And yet wilt
thou suffer thy poore Soule, thy principall
charge, and above all these worthy the best re-
spect, to lye cankering and rusting in all kinde
of evils: O unspeakable blindnesse, that thou
wilt be nice in wearing a bad Shoe, yet carest
not to carry an ugly and battered Soule: Alas,
doe not thou set so light by that Jewell, which
thy

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thy Maker sets at so high a price: noz rate thou
thy soule at so base a penny-worth, being of so
pærelesse worth. If thy soule be so inestimable,
that neither gold noz treasure, noz any thing of
lesse price, than the pæcious blood of the imma-
culate Lambe Christ Iesus, was able to buy it:
if not all the Delicacies that Heaven and Earth
could affoꝝd, but onely the glorious Body of our
Saviour, were deemed a fit repast to feed it: If
not all the creatures of this, oꝝ millions of new
worl^{ds} if they were, but onely the unlimitable
goodnesse and Matestie of God, can satisfie the
desire, oꝝ fill the compasse and capacity of it (foz
who is so unsensible, that findes not the insatie-
fie of his Soule :) Who then, but one of perverse
will, incredulous mind, oꝝ pitlesse spirit, would
set more by the worl^d, than his soules wor<sup>thi-
nesse</sup>: oꝝ suffer so pærelesse a Paragon, so ma-
ny houres, dayes, moneths, and yæres, to lye en-
channelled in the filthy myze of sin? Thou wilt
frudge to the Physician foꝝ thy sicke Seruant,
and loke out foꝝ a Leech to cure thy diseased horse,
and be very busie to patch up thy worn garments,
and yet wilt suffer thy soule to ianguish foꝝ want
of looking to, and dye foꝝ want of cure: and seeing
it mangled with millions of vices, never seekest
to bind it up, and restore it to its primitive in-
tegritie. As thy seruant more nære, thy Horse

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more deare, and thy coat to bee more cared for
than thy owne Soule? How long, O how long
wilt thou hunt after vanities, and rush violent-
ly and wilfully into thy owne ruine? Darest
thou not suffer a Spider or a Toad to come
nere thee? and wilt thou nestle in thy bosome so
many Wipers as Vices, so many Serpents
as Sins? and permit thy silly soule to be gnaw-
ed upon with the poysonous fumes of Satan?
Is thy soule so slight a substance, as to bee held
in so small esteeme? Did Christ come downe
from Heauen, and become a wandring Pilgrim
upon earth, exiling himselfe from the comfort of
his God-head, and wearing out thirtie yeeres
in paine and penury for our soules? Did he suf-
fer the Tragedie of his Passion to bee bloodily
acted and patiently accepted? Did hee make
his Body as a cloud, to dissolve into showers
of unblemished blood, and yielded the dearest
veine of his heart to be cut asunder, that from
thence may issue the precious price of our soules
redemption? Why doe we then sell our selues to
the Deuill for every delight and poore pittance
of worldly pelfe? O that a creature of so incom-
parable a worth, should be in the custody of so
unnaturall Maylozs, and that, which in it selfe is
so gracious and amiable, that the Angels and
Saints delight to behold, should by sinne be made
a ho:

a horrour to Heaven, and a fit play-scene for the foulest fiends: Let us remember that our soule is not onely a part of us, but also the Temple, the Paradise of Almighty God, by him in baptisme garnished, furnished, and endowed with most glorious ornaments: How will he take it, to see his Temple prophaned, and turned into a Den of Devils: His Paradise displanted and made a wilderness of Serpents: his Spouse deflowred and become an Adulteresse to his enemies: Durst wee commit such out-rage against our earthly Princes: Would not the terrour of the Law, and popular shame curbe us from it: and shall not the glorious Majesty of Jehovah, and the unrebated keenenesse of his flaming double-edged Sword, deterre us from offering the like to his dearest Spouse: Will hee that keepes Register of every singular haire, suffer himselfe to be wronged, and ober-passe it unpunished: Remember that it is a thing full of horrour, to fall into the hands of God, who is able to crush the proudest spirit, and to make his face his foot-stole: O wattle not against the cares and cypes of thine owne Conscience, but so keepe and conserue it, as that at the last it may gladly goe with thee, and be ioyfully prepared before the Throne of God, to answer for thee.

There was a man had three Friends: two

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In heereof he loved intirely, the third he made no reckning of. This man being conuicted befoze the King, upon the acusalation of some committed crime, solemnely came unto his best Friend, and intreated him to goe with him, but he would not. yet went he with him some part of the way; Wethinking himselfe better, he returned to his second Friend. and desired him to goe with him, but hee made him that flat answer, that by reason of his more important affaires, hee could not goe with him; yet gave him a token of his remembrance. Being driven to this hard exigent, he trudged to his third Friend of whom he made slight account, and hee at first would went with him to the King, and there stuck to him in all his dangers. So fares it with a man being sent for by Death, hee comes to his Wife, Children or Friends, and intreats them to goe along with him: but they slip their neckes out of the Coller, and will not only beare him company to the Grave: then he perswades his Goods and Gold to goe along with him, but they cannot, and so turnes him off with a single simple sheet lapt about him: then when all these shrinke backe and forsake him at the last point his bolome Friend, his Conscience will not forsake him. Labour then to get a good Conscience: for in the utmost of extremities, that will never faile thee. There
was

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was a Countrie, where the Commons used to elect their King, and againe to banish him at their pleasure, to a far Country, almost naked: But one (more provident than the rest) so soon as he was chosen King, he daily sent before-hand some provision into that farre Country: so that when the people banished him from them, hee was (having made a provident preparation of wealth before) most royally there entertained.

So must every cautelous Christian provide upon Earth, as he may be joyfully received into Heaven.

Prayers

Prayers for private Houſholds at all times.

O Lord prepare our hearts to prayer.

O Most mightie and eternall God, who art the Creator, Guider, Governour, and preserver of all things, both in heaven and earth, vouchsafe we humbly beseech thee, to look downe with the eye of pitie and compassion, upon us miserable, and wretched sinners, who at this time are prostrate here before thee, to offer up this our sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving unto thee, and although we be unworthy by reason of our manifold transgressions to present our selves before thee; yet we humbly beseech thee for thy Son Christ Jesus, our blessed Lord and Saviors sake, to accept of us, and to grant these our prayers and petitions which we make unto thee.

O mercifull Lord, and loving Father, remember the infirmities of thy fraile servants, assisting our weake soules with thy grace, that in all things we may love, honour, and obey thy heavenly will and Majesty, waking and walking in the paths of righteousness, to the scope of perfect holynes, contemning this witching world, with all her foolish illusions, for the true glorifying of thy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

Another

Prayers for private Households.

Another Prayer.

O Mercifull Lord, and loving Father, that of the incōprehensible riches of thy mercy toward the disobedient and lost Children of *Adam* (who serving Satan after the blind and unbridled lusts of the vile flesh, were carried away through sinne and ignorance to damnation) hast reconciled us to thy favour, through grace and adoption in Christ Jesus the righteous, by faith and holy conversatiō: in whom we are delivered from eternall death and destruction : Have mercy upon us, yea (Lord) have mercy upon us, and for the love of thy sweet Son, our Redeemer. defend us against the power of the Destroyer, and with thy mighty hand lift us out of the puddle and deathfull corruptions of this abominable world, purifying our hearts with thy grace, that we being wholly inclined to the heavenly desires, may grow perfect in holinesse, and abounding in the good workes which thou hast prepared for thy Saints to walk in for the glorifying of thy Name ; wee may grow an acceptable Temple for thy continuall dwelling in us, ô Lord, to the unspeakable peace and comfort, and to the everlasting blisse and salvation of our souls, through Christ our Saviour, *Amen.*

Lord let not the darknesse of ignorance comprehend us.

Lead

Prayers for private Holybolds.

Lead us by the continuall light of thy grace to worke righteousnesse.

Let us not sleepe in sinne, O God.

Quicken our weake soules against earthly sluggishnesse.

Give us the heavenly rest of thy unspeakeable peace, O Lord.

And nourish us with thy grace to salvation.

Lord comfort the needy, the sicke, the prisoned, the tormented, the distressed and helpelesse with the presence of thy grace: and have mercie upon them and us.

Pitifully heare our complaints, O deare Father, and grant our requests, for thy sweet Sonnes sake our Saviour.

FINIS.

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PEDRINS -

DEAD KNEEL - 1637